

William Hayden Jr. to Andrew Jackson, March 29, 1824, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

WILLIAM HAYDEN, JR., TO JACKSON.

Washington, March 29, 1824.

. . . . A copy of the *Columbian Observer*, a paper printed at Philadelphia, and which contains some animadversions upon my report of your remarks on the bill for the armament of the fortifications, has just been put into my hands. I send, herewith, that paper; together with the *Intelligencer* containing the Report alluded to. Will you do me the favor, sir, if you have leisure, to look over the Report; and see if, in your opinion, it deserves the censure cast upon it, by the Philadelphia paper.

Our reports of the proceedings of Congress are, upon many subjects, necessarily brief—and, doubtless, often imperfect. It is impossible they should not be so. Those only, who are practically acquainted with the business, can be aware of the difficulty of giving satisfaction to all. The principal consideration, in drafting the Reports, is, *the nature of the subject*. If it is one of great and general interest, it is endeavored to extend the report farther than can be done on questions of a more local or restricted nature. It is always intended, however, that they shall be impartial.

If the remarks in the *Observer* had applied to the Reporter only, he would not have deemed them of sufficient importance to authorize him to call your attention, from weightier matters, to so humble an object as himself. But as they involve others, to whom the blame, if there be cause for any, ought not to attach, he deems it his duty to request your candid opinion, whether there is any appearance, in the sketch of your remarks, of an intention

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to mutilate, or misrepresent, and whether they are not given fairly, as taken in connection with the rest of the report on the same subject?